

1997

ROP
DUCTION

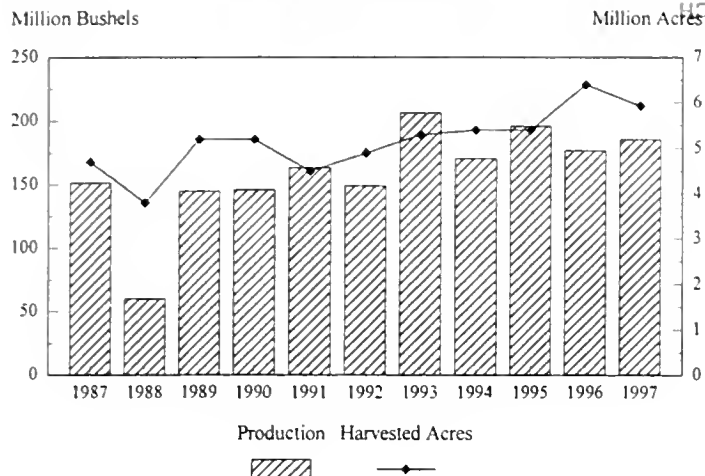
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Annual Summary 1997

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Montana All Wheat



Dry conditions during the fall of 1996 led winter wheat producers to plant the second smallest winter wheat crop since 1951. Montana's winter wheat acreage was estimated at 1.6 million acres, down 26 percent from last year. Winter kill caused many acres to be reseeded, but producers were able to harvest 1.45 million acres, down 27 percent from 1996. Adequate moisture at the beginning of the season and timely rains in most of the winter wheat producing areas set the stage for the fourth highest yield on record. Average yield was estimated at 39 bushels per acre, up 7 bushels from last year, for a total production of 56.55 million bushels which is down 11 percent from 1996.

Spring wheat acreage made up for the lost winter wheat acreage. Montana producers planted an estimated 4.35 million acres, up 150,000 from last year, and the largest spring wheat acreage planted since 1953 when other spring and durum wheat records were combined. The eastern third of the state suffered from some drought-like conditions early in the year, but the rest of the state had a fair growing season with timely moisture. Producers were able to harvest 4.2 million acres, up 100,000 from last year. Yields averaged 29 bushels per acre across the state, up 3 bushels from 1996, but down nearly 3 bushels from the last five-year average due mainly to lower yields in the eastern third of the state. Total production was estimated at 121.8 million bushels, up 14 percent from last year. This is the second largest crop on record only behind 1995's production.

Montana durum wheat growers planted

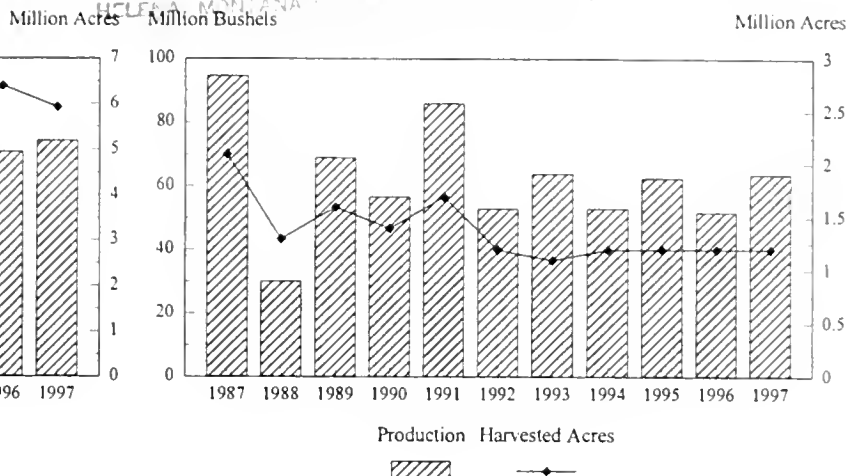
290,000 acres and harvested 280,000 acres, both unchanged from last year's revised acreage estimates. Droughty conditions reduced yields to an average 26 bushels per acre, up 1 bushel from last year, when drought-like conditions also occurred. Total production was estimated at 7.28 million bushels, up nearly 4 percent from last year.

Barley acreage in Montana was estimated at 1.3 million acres with harvested acreage set at 1.2 million acres, both unchanged from 1996. Average yields were set at 53 bushels per acre, up 10 bushels from last year. This is the second highest yield on record. Not as much barley is grown in the eastern portion of the state which kept yields up unlike spring wheat. Total production was estimated at 63.6 million bushels, up 23 percent from last year.

Oat production was estimated at 3.85 million bushels, nearly twice the amount produced last year. Producers harvested more acreage and had better yields than 1996. Planted acreage was estimated at 140,000 acres, up 40,000 from last year. Harvested acreage was set at 70,000 acres, up 20,000 from last year. Yields averaged 55 bushels per acre, up 15 bushels from last year.

Montana producers harvested 14,000 acres of corn for grain in 1997, down 1,000 acres from last year. The average yield was 135 bushels per acre, down 2 bushels from last year's record. Production decreased 8 percent from last year to 1.89 million bushels. Corn for silage acreage was estimated at 45,000 acres, up 6,000 acres from 1996. Yields

Montana Barley



averaged 21 tons per acre, the same as a year ago.

Sugar beet producers in Montana harvested an estimated 58,300 acres of beets this year, up 800 acres from a year ago. Yields decreased 1.6 tons from last year to average 21.0 tons per acre. Total production was estimated at 1.2 million tons, down 8 percent from 1996.

Montana dry bean growers produced an estimated 257,000 cwt. of dry beans in 1997. Production was up 22,000 cwt. from 1996. Growers harvested 11,700 acres with a yield of 22.0 cwt. per acre compared with last year's 10,300 acres harvested with a yield of 22.8 cwt. per acre.

Fall potato production in Montana totaled 3.33 million cwt., up 4 percent from last year. Producers harvested 10,400 acres compared with 10,200 in 1996. Yields increased 5 cwt. per acre from a year ago to 320 cwt.

All hay harvested in Montana was the same as last year at 2.6 million acres. All hay production was 5.48 million tons, up 11 percent or 560,000 tons from a year ago. Alfalfa hay harvested acreage was 1.65 million acres, down 50,000 acres from last season. The average yield was 2.4 tons per acre compared with 2.1 tons per acre in 1996. Other hay harvested acreage was 950,000 acres and the average yield was 1.6 tons per acre, 0.1 ton above last year. Montana hay growers seeded an estimated 150,000 acres of alfalfa during 1997. New seedlings include those mixed with a nurse crop, other forage, or direct seedings.

MONTANA ANNUAL CROP SUMMARY, 1994-97 1/

Crop	Year	Acreage		Yield Per Acre	Total Production	Season Avg Price	Value of Production	US Production
		Planted	Harvested					
		Thousands		Bushels	Thousands		Thousands	Thousands
Winter Wheat	1994	1,950	1,850	35.0	64,750	\$3.45	\$223,388	1,661,943
	1995	1,500	1,370	40.0	54,800	**4.62	253,176	1,544,653
	1996	2,150	1,980	32.0	63,360	4.24	268,646	1,477,058
	1997	1,600	1,450	39.0	56,550	3.45	195,098	1,882,609
Durum Wheat	1994	180	178	30.0	5,340	\$4.83	\$25,792	96,747
	1995	270	265	30.0	7,950	5.09	40,466	102,280
	1996	290	280	25.0	7,000	4.65	32,550	116,090
	1997	290	280	26.0	7,280	5.05	36,764	86,193
Other Spring Wheat	1994	3,450	3,350	30.0	100,500	\$3.51	\$352,755	562,291
	1995	3,950	3,800	35.0	**133,000	**4.59	**610,470	535,658
	1996	4,200	4,100	26.0	106,600	4.22	449,852	691,985
	1997	**4,350	**4,200	29.0	121,800	3.70	450,660	557,750
All Wheat	1994	5,580	5,378	31.7	170,590	\$3.54	\$601,935	2,320,981
	1995	5,720	5,435	36.0	195,750	**4.63	**904,112	2,182,591
	1996	**6,640	**6,360	27.8	176,960	4.24	751,048	2,285,133
	1997	6,240	5,930	31.3	185,630	3.80	682,522	2,526,552
Barley	1994	1,300	1,200	44.0	52,800	\$2.22	\$117,216	374,862
	1995	1,300	1,200	52.0	62,400	3.00	187,200	359,562
	1996	1,300	1,200	43.0	51,600	**3.07	158,412	395,751
	1997	1,300	1,200	53.0	63,600	2.85	181,260	374,478
Oats	1994	140	75	48.0	3,600	\$1.30	\$4,680	229,008
	1995	145	80	59.0	4,720	1.75	8,260	162,027
	1996	*100	50	40.0	2,000	1.91	3,820	155,273
	1997	140	70	55.0	3,850	1.25	4,813	176,104
Corn for Grain 2/	1994	60	20	135.0	2,700	\$2.65	\$7,155	10,102,735
	1995	55	16	120.0	1,920	3.00	5,760	7,373,876
	1996	*55	15	**137.0	2,055	2.60	5,343	9,293,435
	1997	60	14	135.0	1,890	2.60	4,914	9,365,574
		Thousands		Tons	Thousands		Thousands	Thousands
Corn for Silage	1994	--	39	21.0	819	--	--	88,588
	1995	--	38	20.0	760	--	--	77,867
	1996	--	39	21.0	819	--	--	83,594
	1997	--	45	**21.0	945	--	--	91,903
Sugar Beets	1994	54.3	54.0	**24.2	1,307	\$41.90	\$54,763	31,853
	1995	55.7	55.5	21.5	1,193	39.90	47,601	28,065
	1996	57.7	57.5	22.6	1,300	48.10	62,530	26,680
	1997	59.9	58.3	21.0	1,224	--	--	29,874
Alfalfa Hay	1994	--	1,550	2.30	3,565	\$71.50	\$254,898	81,336
	1995	--	1,600	2.50	**4,000	67.50	270,000	84,515
	1996	--	**1,700	2.10	3,570	81.00	289,170	79,517
	1997	--	1,650	2.40	3,960	82.00	324,720	79,242
Other Hay	1994	--	*650	1.50	975	\$62.50	\$60,938	68,724
	1995	--	800	**1.70	1,360	56.50	76,840	69,651
	1996	--	900	1.50	1,350	67.00	90,450	69,940
	1997	--	950	1.60	1,520	70.50	107,160	72,878
All Hay 3	1994	--	2,200	2.06	4,540	\$71.00	\$315,836	150,060
	1995	--	2,400	**2.23	5,360	66.00	346,840	154,166
	1996	--	2,600	1.89	4,920	80.00	379,620	149,457
	1997	--	**2,600	2.11	**5,480	81.00	**431,880	152,120
Sweet Cherries 4	1994	--	--	--	640	\$1,200.00	\$770	192,910
	1995	--	--	--	760	1,210.00	916	153,070
	1996	--	--	--	630	1,420.00	893	151,880
	1997	--	--	--	970	965.00	936	220,370
		Thousands		Cwt.	Thousands		Thousands	Thousands
Fall Potatoes	1994	10.0	10.0	320.0	3,200	\$6.90	\$22,080	424,655
	1995	9.8	9.8	300.0	2,940	9.35	27,489	403,009
	1996	10.4	10.2	315.0	3,213	6.60	21,206	453,436
	1997	10.4	10.4	**320.0	**3,328	8.85	**29,453	417,088
Dry Beans	1994	10.2	10.0	22.0	220	\$16.90	\$3,718	29,028
	1995	11.0	10.8	19.0	205	16.10	3,301	30,812
	1996	10.5	10.3	**22.8	235	24.50	5,758	27,960
	1997	12.2	11.7	22.0	257	18.50	4,755	29,156

1 All estimates for 1997 are preliminary. 2/ Planted for all purposes 3/ Price of baled hay 4/ Utilized production in actual tons
*Record low **Record high